NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

Quakers - the Religious Society of Friends – Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hahi Tuhauwiri

May 2026

Spiritual Thought

"Daughter Abigail,

The time when you were born and came into the world, was a time of deep exercise and trouble with me— not from the Lord, who always spoke peace unto me, and did sustain me—but by reason of the adversary of mankind, who always seeks to devour the good in all, and is the sower of discord and mischief in the hearts of those who fear not the Lord, neither abide in His counsel. Into these he enters, as any place is given unto his temptations, and there he corrupts the mind.

But though there was then a great trial that came upon me, the Lord kept my heart in uprightness unto Him and gave me much patience. And though the earth had been removed into the sea, and all outward things had run into confusion, and nature had changed its course, yet the Lord gave me a resolution and strength not to be troubled or offended, because He did support me. **At that time you were born; and therefore I called your name Abigail, which means the father's joy or delight; for in you I was comforted, and my present trouble was mitigated.**

Your dear father,
Francis Howgill"

— Francis Howgill, 1666
Early Quaker minister

This from Francis Howgill speaks to modern times,don't you think? There have always been times of trouble. And we can treasure our children through whatever happens.

News of Friends

Lizi has moved to Summerset in the Richmond Ranges, Hill St, Richmond, where she has a small apartment furnished with her favourite items and her art work. She welcomes visitors but call first as she may be out or engaged in the activities there. Her cellphone number remains the same.

Shona has lost her companion of many years; Martin died in hospital after a fall. Our thoughts are with her.

John M. Is facilitating AVP (Alternatives to Violence) courses in Nepal and will travel on to Seattle to be with family.

Adele and Chris are enjoying their new home and have been cooking up batches of chutney which they shared with Friends.

Phillida led our April Discussion on 'Strengthening the resistence to Neoliberalism' in a very interesting format using her own life as the timeline. She was born in England in 1944 and lived through a wide range of political changes, from post-war rationing to her own role as a Green MP in New Zealand. Her analysis of the difference between girls' education and boys', especially in elite boarding schools, was insightful and throws light on the growth of neo-liberalism with its attitudes of individualism rather than community well-being. We left with a lot to think and talk about.

John D. has been visiting his brother in Te Anau and travelled to Little Wanganui on the West Coast before returning to Nelson and Golden Bay.



DIARY OF EVENTS:

Wednesday 27th May at the Meeting House 7pm -8.45pm Elizabeth will lead a discussion for us to share the methods we use for healing, the places we turn to in times of trouble.

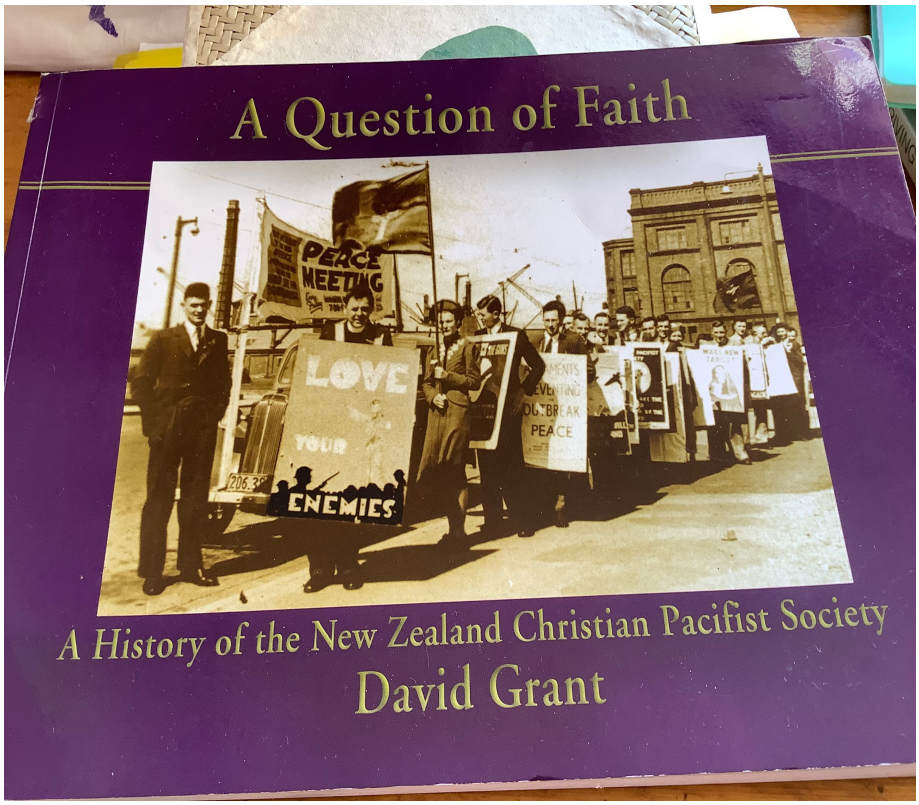
Sunday 7th June at approx 12.15pm Our next Business Meeting, following Meeting for Worship and a shared lunch.

Sunday 7th June 4pm at 17 Parere St (Adele and Chris's place): 'The Doctor's Wife' a film about New Zealanders Alan and Hazel Kerr and their work in Gaza over 20 years. After retiring from a distinguished career as a cardiac surgeon in New Zealand, Dr Alan Kerr led a Kiwi team to Gaza and the West Bank to operate on children with heart disease. What started as a two week visit became an enduring 20 year commitment to Palestine, involving 40 medical missions to Gaza and the West bank and hundreds of operations.

All welcome, bring friends.

Book Review

A Question of Faith
A history of the New Zealand Christian Pacifist Society
David Grant



I came across this book when I was helping Christine stocktake the Quaker library. I thought I must come back to it so and I got it out and read it so here are a few thoughts.

The NZ Christian Pacifist Society (CPS) was begun in 1936 in New Zealand and stayed in existence until 2002 when the last members were aged and few and the Society needed to be wound up. David Grant is a historian who did his masters degree on conscientious objectors in World War 2. He was asked in 2003 by the last members of the CPS to write the history down.

Well, thank goodness he agreed as this book records the antecedents, the forceful characters involved in the founding of the Society and their activities opposing World War 2 and all war.

I first heard of the CPS when I lived at Riverside Community from !980 until 1990. I was made aware of the CPS as there were members of it still living at Riverside and the community itself was founded by members of the CPS, in particular A.C. Barrington, one of their leading speakers and activists.

This book is a faithful record of the Society, who formed it, how it operated in its heyday and how it continued until the 21st century. Some parts are a quite prosaic record but many of the people involved shine through in terms of their commitment to peace, finding another way to resolve conflict and acting in ways to ensure their views were heard and taken into consideration. Some of the actions were pretty 'out there' for people in the 1930s and 1940s but there was a commitment and tenacity to the cause.

Those of you who don't have much of an idea about peace activism in New Zealand will learn quite a bit and I think, be inspired and reassured by this history.

Bronwen Pelvin, May 2026

Click here to see a web copy of this email



Friends World News: May 2026

Dear Friends,
Greetings from Swarthmoor Hall – known as the 'cradle of Quakerism' – on the first day of the 2026 in-person Central Executive Committee meeting, with Friends from around the world.
Last week many of us took part in Britain Yearly Meeting where, among many other joys, CEC members led singing for all age worship.
However, we do not take our ability to meet for granted. Please hold Middle East Yearly Meeting and Cuba Yearly Meeting in the Light, which have been indefinitely cancelled "as a direct result of policy decisions and acts of war by the current US administration". You can find out more in the Section of the Americas' and EMES' news story on their websites by clicking the text hyperlinked.
FWCC Justice and Peace Secretary Hezron Masitsa has recently returned from the USA where he serves as clerk to the Quaker United Nations Committee (New York). He was able to hear first hand from QUNO staff, including about their work to support peacebuilding efforts in Myanmar and Korea.

This includes building trusted relationships with UN missions and members of the UN Security Council, and acting as a neutral convenor for off record conversations. For example, in March QUNO New York hosted a delegation from Myanmar following 'sham' elections held by a military junta at the start of 2026. Find out more about this on QUNO's website here.

Meanwhile QUNO Geneva recently made a statement at the UN Human Rights Council on rising militarization as a barrier to peace. Find out more here.

We're also continuing to share with others the Spiritual foundations of our work. FWCC General Secretary Tim Gee recently spoke on the BBC about the book of the Bible written by James the Just, which proclaims a message of peace with justice. The recording isn't available worldwide, but a shorter version for Friends is here.

Finally, I hope you might be inspired by Europe and Middle East Section Clerk Ethel Livermore's reflection on her attendance of all four FWCC Section gatherings in the last year. She writes, "If I had to pick one word to unite all the gatherings it would have to be 'joy'. The joy of being together, worshipping together, sharing and learning from each other." You can read it online here.

I look forward to sharing the outcomes of the CEC, including our mission to "express our common heritage" by visiting and speaking about the places where Quakerism began.

Until then, may you "consider it pure joy…whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance". (James 1: 2-3).

In Friendship, Ruby Cumming, Communications Manager, On behalf of the FWCC World Office

Poem

Untitled

The house is quiet now

And still.

No gale from the sea

No weeping in the garden

Or cry from the hill.

Later there will be stars

And a moon

Tomorrow the sun.

J.C. Sturm in Dedications 1996

Deadline for next Newsletter Our Newsletter is a way to share our lives – to help build our Quaker community. Thanks to everyone who has sent contributions. Please consider sending in your news, a book review, a quote that speaks to you…. Send newsletter items for the March letter to Christine: c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz **The cut-off date for items for the next newsletter is Friday, 5th June 2026.**

A reminder about Quakers NZ Website:

https://quakers.nz/ is the database for the New Zealand Religious Society of Friends. It is a useful source of information on people and events. Please get into the habit of referring to the database, and please make sure your details are entered and up to date. This is where we go when we are looking for a Friend's phone number, etc. This database is only as good as the data you enter so, please make use of this important communication tool.
Nelson Meeting newsletters and lots of other material is posted and archived there. You can subscribe to the Aotearoa NZ Friends Newsletter there.

Our Programme: below is a reminder of the different activities each month.

All Sundays: Meeting for Worship, 10am, Quaker Meeting House, 30 Nile St. Nelson

Christchurch MM Meeting for Worship can be attended each Sunday at 10.30am by Zoom
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87862680716?pwd=e1pt0MhuXXuUP9fawEaxbxLKPWzndE.1

2nd Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10am, Family Service Centre, Talbot St. Motueka

4th Wednesday: Home Discussion Group, 7pm – 8.45pm. Topic & venue for this month, see above

Children are welcome at all Meetings for Worship and activities will be provided for them.